



CONNECTIONS

The Newsletter of All Faiths Unitarian Congregation
A member of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations

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by Alberita Johnson, CL Minister

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GRATEFUL DEAD WORKSHOP

Saturday, October 11, 2025—2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Facilitated by Lily Nieves

Participants will examine global ancestral practices and the myriad ways of those who have transitioned "come out" to communicate with us. (Pg. 7) *Sign up on the bulletin board.*

DIGNITY: ITS ESSENTIAL ROLE IN RESOLVING CONFLICT

Sunday Morning Workshops at 9:15 a.m.

October 5 - December 7 - (No workshop Oct. 19)

Facilitated by Joyce Ramay

Based on the book by Donna Hicks. Choosing dignity as a way of life, Hicks shows that we can open the way to greater peace within ourselves and to a safer and more humane world for all. (Pg.)

TRICKS OR TREATS IN THE PARKING LOT

Friday, October 31, 2025—2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Dress up, or not, and help All Faith goblins hand out Halloween Treats in the parking lot. This annual tradition is always thrilling! (Pg. 7) *Sign up on the bulletin board.*





Greetings All Faiths Family,

Finally, my office is officially ready for occupancy. Our Child & Youth Program Director (CYP) Sharon Heinrich and I have moved ourselves back in. We have less furnishing that now gives more room for both of us and the children and youth. The office has been painted bright white, so it looks larger. Regina, our Administrator, also has a new desk and computer. It is perfect timing and also it seems like a gift, as Carole and I celebrated my second anniversary as the minister here at All Faiths on September 1st. For all of you who helped upgrade our offices and put furniture together, I say thank you for the generosity of time and talent you all extended. It is greatly appreciated.

We closed out the month of September with Water Communion, our Homecoming Celebration.

As October is upon us, we will move from our theme of Building Belonging to Cultivating Compassion. This is timely as several leaders in the community are working together to make Fort Myers a Compassionate City. I have been asked to participate as a leader and have become hopeful that we can make this happen. We have held three monthly forums so far, two in Fort Myers, and one in Estero. At each one the number of attendees has increased. The last gathering was Saturday, September 20th. The gatherings have all been on a Saturday, however we plan to host the forums on a different day of the week, so that those who are not available on Saturdays may hopefully join us. This in and of itself is an act of compassion, since putting others before us is not robbery and never has been.

Compassion seeks to extend tender loving kindness to the self and others, even to our planet. Concerning compassion, it is helpful to look back and learn. About 320 million years ago, reptiles appeared here on earth. They survived basically by instinct, relying heavily on the four Fs: Fighting, Feeding, Fleeing and mating. As creatures evolved, the neo-cortex of the brain appeared and matured, so that we mammals began to exhibit care and concern for others, and eventually became tribal in nature. It was a shift from survival of the fittest to survival of the tribe ...and compassion was born. This obviously was a giant step, but think of it as an arc from instinctual survival to communal care. Sometime within that arc, compassion was born. And with it came the realization of the inherent worth and dignity of the self and others, including our planet and climate.

Not long ago, many of us here in SWFL found ourselves

just about homeless due to hurricane Ian, myself included. My partner and I moved four or five times in one year, while our home was being repaired. We relied on the love and kindness of family and friends to take us in. When we asked if they had space, they opened it for us. It was love and compassion in action. I wonder how many of you have experienced disasters like homelessness, hunger, fear, uncertainty, desperation, illness, loneliness, depression, anxiety and so much more. Nothing can help to ease these burdens more than acts of love and compassion. In summary, there is pity, I feel sorry; there is empathy, ooh I feel your pain; and then there is compassion, I desire to help lift your pain and suffering, even eliminate it.

Our liturgical calendar has themes that many Unitarian Universalist congregations follow:

(continued on page 9)

Mission Statement

All Faiths Unitarian Congregation is committed to Justice, Equity and Compassion.

Vision Statement

Recognizing our role as each other's keepers, we strive to be an inclusive, loving, spiritual community working to bring harmony to the world.

All Faiths Collection Schedule

Monthly Share-the-Plate & Special Collections

(Please write organization and amount in the memo line of your check.)

October - Cape Coral Pride (Rainbow Connection)

November - Operation Joy - Holiday Cheer

December - Special Collection: Employee Bonuses

August Share the Plate raised \$557 for Quality Life Center - Scholarships!

*Your generosity directly benefits our community all year long!
We are grateful!*



“True compassion means not only feeling another’s pain, but also being moved to help relieve it”

– Daniel Goleman

Shaping a Compassionate Fort Myers

On Saturday, September 20th, a group of ten All Faiths members attended an incredibly powerful meeting at FGCU whose intent is to bring compassion to the city of Fort Myers. The meeting included a diverse collection of community and religious leaders from the area along with teachers, students and various organizations in the community. We began by discussing what compassion means to us and what a compassionate Fort Myers would look like. The intent was to begin building action plans to make this happen. The room was filled with so much love and excitement that it was hard not to be caught up in the possibility. This is a very positive step toward achieving Beloved Community and

changing the current negative political climate in our lives. The meeting included almost 100 people and was the 3rd in a series of meetings, and I highly recommend getting involved in future events. We need to be the change we desire.

Board Meeting Updates

1. The Board of Directors approved the updated plans from the architect to enlarge the vestibule and build a wall that would allow for a separate meeting room in the Fellowship Hall. The plans will now be sent to the engineering consultant to make sure that any potential plumbing, electrical, HVAC, etc. issues are identified and resolved. Then we will begin the permitting process with the city and obtain quotes from several contractors. At that time, we will hold a final review with the congregation and ask that a capital campaign be started to finance the project.

2. The Board approved funding for the following

ground improvement projects:

a. Repair several areas on the patio where the paver bricks have become sunken or uneven and pose a potential safety hazard.

b. Remove the “stepped” portion of the sidewalk running between the outside wall of the office and the memorial garden and replace it with a solid ramp made of paver blocks like those used in the patio.

c. Build a professional retaining wall around the memorial garden to eliminate any concerns about possible erosion issues that could impact the garden bricks as well as improve the overall look of the existing “homemade” wall. This is possible due to a very generous gift from a member of All Faiths.

d. Lastly, we are continuing to investigate appropriate lighting (possibly solar) for the newly installed street sign.

3. The Board has agreed to allow troop #2055 of the Girl Scouts to hold their regular Tuesday meetings at All Faiths starting September 30th. In return, the girls offer to volunteer at various All Faiths activities like Spring and Fall clean ups, etc. They expect approx. 30 girls to attend as well as interested parents. This is a huge opportunity for the congregation, and we are so excited to partner with them.

I want to remind everyone that All Faiths Board meetings are held monthly on the 3rd Tuesday of every month at 1pm and are open to all mem-

bers, if anyone wishes to observe.

Upcoming Events:

1. The Board approved to hold a Clergy Appreciation Day on Sunday, October 12th where we will honor our minister at the Sunday service and have a celebration afterwards.

2. All Faiths is working to design and build a scarecrow that will be submitted into Lakes Park Scarecrow in the Park event. It will run from October 10th through the 31st. This 3-week event attracts over 50,000 visitors to see the submissions. This is part of our membership outreach efforts.

3. On Friday October 24th, All Faiths will host a booth at the Quality of Life Center Fall Festival and introduce All Faiths message to everyone and pass out candy to the kids

4. Due to a multitude of competing events going on during this time, the All Faiths Fall Festival mini golf event planned for October will have to be postponed to a more convenient time. Maybe it can be remade into a Winter or Spring event. More to come.

5. Look for more information about supporting the Halloween Candy Give Away in the parking lot in October, and the Fall Cleanup Day and Junk in the Trunk events in November.

6. The monthly Night Market at the Alliance for the Arts will be Wednesday, October 15th from 5 to 8pm. If you are interested, please see Carole Latino or me.

ALL FAITHS WELCOMES GIRL SCOUT TROOP 2055

All Faiths is happy to welcome local Girl Scout Troop 2055 to our facility. Beginning in October the Troop will hold their bimonthly meetings at All Faiths. In exchange for space, the girls will be available at times to volunteer in different capacities for All Faiths.

Making the world a better place is all in a day’s work for a Girl Scouts, and All Faiths is happy to support them.



Happening at All Faiths

Happy October Birthday to you!



October 4	Michael Pierre
October 17	Dan DeShon
October 23	Ruth King Fotovat
October 24	Joan Keller
October 24	Sheryll Dahlke
October 27	Donalie Benyak

And Coming Up...

November 5 Linda Runkle

If you are missing or see someone who is missing from the birthday roster, please let Regina know.

The All Voices Choir Practice

Thursdays 5:00 - 6:30pm

The choir welcomes new members. You do not have to be a professional singer or read sheet music to join. Go ahead, give it a try. Contact: Carlos Garcia, ceegeefm@gmail.com.

McGregor Clinic Collection

Every 3rd Sunday of the Month at Service

The McGregor Clinic is a non-profit health care clinic designed to provide an integrated and holistic approach to patient and community care. Your donations of *men's and women's clothing, and non-perishable foods*, benefit people with HIV/AIDS and their families. Contact: David Donovan, ddonovan722@gmail.com

Book Club

Meeting on the 3rd Monday of the Month at 12 p.m.

The book club is casual and fun. No assigned books, just show up and be prepared to talk about an interesting book you've read or are reading. Contact: Diane Chernow, dianecher@comcast.net

Sunday Adult Ed. Workshops

Sundays at 9:15 a.m. beginning October 5 (no Workshop 10/19)

Join us for an exploration of dignity, its role in human conflict, and its power to improve relationships. Joyce Ramay will lead nine weeks of discussions on the book, *Dignity: Its Essential Role in Resolving Conflict*, by Donna Hicks,

Solos Luncheon

Saturday, October 4, 2025
1:00 p.m.

Bahama Breeze

14701 S. Tamiami Trail, Ft. Myers

*check your email for details.
This special Solos gathering
is open to all.*

RSVP to: Ken Malkin,
kennethmmalkin@gmail.com

Mexican Train Dominoes

Meeting on the 2nd & 4th Friday of the Month at 2 p.m.

Join in on this fun and popular dominoes game. Don't know how to play? Come and we'll teach you -- it's easy. Contact Ken Malkin at kennethmmalkin@gmail.com to get on email distribution list.

ACMA Songwriters Circle

Meeting on Sundays 2:00 - 5:00 p.m.

The circle is for Acoustic Songwriters of all levels. Songs and experiences are shared in a non-judgmental, casual atmosphere. All are welcome to come and play or just listen. ACMA is secular and is all about original music. No Membership required. We support Americana/Folk, Singer/Songwriters and provide a venue for performing original music.

October 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2 5pm Choir Practice	3	4 1pm Solos Lunch (Pg. 4) 7pm ACMA Concert (Pg. 11)
5 9:15am Sunday Workshop 10:30am Service & CYP	6	7 1:30pm Climate Action Team Mtg. via Zoom 6pm Girl Scouts	8	9 5pm Choir Practice	10 All Faiths' Scarecrow Display at Lakes Regional Park through 10/31 2pm Dominoes	11 2-4pm Grateful Dead Workshop
Regina on Vacation - Office Closed Regina on Vacation - Office Closed Regina on Vacation - Office Closed						
12 9:15am Sunday Workshop 10:30am Service & CYP 12 pm Rainbow Connection	13 2pm New Care Circle	14 10am Racial Equity Meeting	15	16 10 am Finance Mtg. 5pm Choir Practice 7pm Tamiami Tale Tellers	17	18 10am Sunday Service Team Mtg. 7pm ACMA Concert (Pg. 11)
19 9:15am (No Workshop) 10:30am Service & CYP McGregor Clinic Collection	20	21 1pm Board Meeting 6pm Girl Scouts	22	23 5pm Choir Practice	24 2pm Dominoes 5:30pm Quality Life Center Fall Festival (Pg. 11)	25
26 9:15am Sunday Workshop 10:30am Service & CYP Ice Cream Social	27 2pm New Care Circle	28 6pm LIFE Mtg. at Cypress Lake United Methodist Church (Pg.7)	29	30 5pm Choir Practice	31 Halloween Tricks or Treats in the Parking Lot 	

Check the online calendar at: allfaithsuu.org
for post-printing updates

OCTOBER 2025
SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES
THEME: CULTIVATING COMPASSION

In-House & Live on Facebook at 10:30 a.m.

Recorded services can be viewed at www.allfaithsuu.org
or on our YouTube channel.

October 5 – Cultivating Compassion Within & Without

Speaker – Alberita Johnson
Worship Associate – Eileen Moran
Music by Carlos Garcia

October 12 – Clergy Appreciation Day

Speaker – David Donovan
Worship Associate – Diane Cartwright
Music by Carlos Garcia

October 19 – Celebrating Diwali:

Hindu Festival of Light
Speaker – Joyce Ramay
Worship Associate – Ken Malkin
Music by Carlos Garcia
McGregor Clinic Collection – David Donovan

October 26 – Honoring the Ancestors

Speaker – Lily Nieves
Worship Associate – Susan Meissner
Music by Carlos Garcia

Sunday Workshop - 9:15am in the Sanctuary

Dignity: Its Essential Role in Resolving Conflict
Facilitated by Joyce Ramay

THE RAINBOW CONNECTION

Every 2nd Sunday at Noon

David Donovan – ddonovan722@gmail.com

A space for the LGBTQ community and allies to
gather in fellowship, plan activities and offer support.

JOYS & SORROWS

*With our apologies for any omissions, here are the joys
& sorrows expressed by our members in September.*

Donalie Benyak lost her brother who died in Michigan.
We extend our sympathy to her and her family.

Peg Clayton Fischer has recovered her ability to walk.
We are happy she has had a good recovery.

Jo Ann Hilliard suffered a broken left hip. She is receiving
physical therapy. We hope she has a good recovery.

Annely Hudanick experienced a severe eye infection.
We hope that she receives successful treatment.

Su Lurker was hospitalized for diagnosis of a lung problem.
We are happy that she has rejoined us for services.

Ken Malkin had heart catheterization. We hope that he
has a good outcome.

Dottie Mayol's aunt died in France. We extend our sympathy
to her and her family.

Wayne Reese expressed appreciation for all the help
that Frank Stephens is providing, including rides to services,
and caring for his dogs.

Joyce Ramay

Care and Support Coordinator

CHILD & YOUTH PROGRAM

by Sharon Heinrich, CYP Director

Our theme in October is “Cultivate Compassion”. Through stories and activities we will explore what it means to cultivate compassion in our congregation, community and wider world web.

Opening: We are here together with love at our center. We will think with our minds, love with our hearts, create with our hand.

October 5: Compassion’s Call to Tiny Actions that Mean So Much “The Lion and the Mouse”

October 12: Compassion’s Call to Treat Everyone With Dignity “The Monk and the Scorpion”

October 19 : Compassion’s Call to Move Outside Our Comfort Zone “The Jobless Umbrella”

October 26: Compassion’s Call to Not Single Anyone Out “The Tale of Stingy Jack...Reimagined with Compassion”

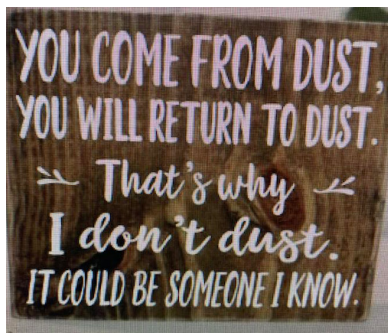
Closing: As we make our choices each day, may we make them with love at our center.

I would like to encourage our congregation to share talent, skill and knowledge with our young people. Please let me know if you would like me to schedule a short time on a Sunday morning for you to share with the young ones.

GRATEFUL DEAD WORKSHOP

Facilitated by Lily Nieves

October 11, 2025 from 2:00 to 4:00 P.M.



Inscription at a Thurmont, Maryland, cemetery reads: "Here lies an Atheist: All dressed up And no place to go."

In many cultures, people seek providence from their deceased ancestors; this practice is sometimes known as ancestor worship or ancestor veneration.

The veneration of the dead can include one's ancestors, friends, and animals that have transitioned.

As we approach *Día de los Muertos* (Day of the Dead), examine global ancestral practices and the myriad ways by which those who have transitioned "come out" to communicate with us. Engage with one another in sharing your personal experiences about your very own Grateful Dead.

LIFE

LEE INTERFAITH FOR EMPOWERMENT

by Ken Malkin, Team Leader

Members of All Faiths, who want to learn more about how LIFE will oppose unfair practices in the future, are invited to a special meeting on Tuesday, October 28 at 6:00 pm at Cypress Lake United Methodist Church, located at 8570 Cypress Lake Dr.

LIFE, or Lee Interfaith for Empowerment, is one of All Faiths' supported missions and a great example of how we show our belief as Unitarian Universalists by doing justice.

At this LIFE workshop, members from each of its 16 faith-based congregations will come together to participate in the formal re-launching of its justice ministry. The meeting will also include a discussion of shared values led by Bishop Lafayette Scales from Ohio. Bishop Scales has helped many similar organizations revitalize their "people power" efforts. There will also be a call to invest in LIFE as the organization looks ahead to hire a new lead organizer.

In the past, LIFE has addressed issues in the criminal justice system, such as children being arrested for minor offenses and unresolved murders. It has also helped people find jobs after being released from jail and has helped improve police treatment of individuals with mental health issues. Most recently, it has focused on increasing affordable rental options in Lee County.

Members of the 16 congregations will choose any new problems that LIFE will address in the future. All Faiths members who attend the meeting on October 28 will have a voice in directing the future work of LIFE.

CARE CIRCLE AND SMALL GROUP MINISTRY

The Care Circle Support Group has undergone a realignment and resumed meeting on Monday, Sept. 29 at 2:00 p.m., facilitated by our Minister, Alberita Johnson. Our Care Circle is here for you to provide support for individuals dealing with emotional pain, and will provide a safe space to share experiences, receive support, learn coping strategies and reduce feelings of isolation.

Small Groups are beneficial in many ways. We are pleased to announce *All Faiths Small Groups* will be formed to share and connect with one another. If you are wondering why, here are a few reasons:

- **Shared Experience:** Hearing from others facing similar challenges can alleviate feelings of isolation and provide a sense of common humanity
- **Expressing Feelings:** Support groups offer a platform for individuals to express their thoughts and feelings without fear of judgment
- **Learning and Empowerment:** Members can learn from each other's experiences and share knowledge on effective coping strategies while offering hope.
- **Improved Social Skills:** Engaging in group activities helps to improve communication and social interactions and reduce loneliness.
- **Valuable Resource:** Offering a supportive environment where individuals can find comfort, guidance and a sense of belonging.

Small Groups are an essential resource for many congregations, offering a respite. Our Soul Matters Small Group curriculum points out, "Around us swirls a shallow, frantic and materialistic culture that leaves us cut off from our deepest self, life's gifts and needs greater than our own." Many of us come to All Faiths, hungry to mend these sacred connections that get frayed and torn. The format is simple: first we listen to each other; second, we listen to our lives, because life is a companion not a challenge; and lastly, we listen to our deepest self. Together these three sacred practices of listening, to each other, the world and our deepest self, add up to a more intentional and authentic life.

Quaker teacher Parker Palmer explains this well:

"So, what do we do in a circle of trust? We speak our own truth; we listen receptively to the truth of others; we ask each other honest, open questions instead of giving counsel; and we offer each other the healing and empowering gifts of silence and laughter... Our purpose is not to teach anyone anything but to give the inner teacher a chance to teach us."

We look forward to launching All Faiths Small Groups Ministry in late October 2025.

RAINBOW CONNECTION NEWS

by David Donovan & Carole Latino, Co-Chairs

I want to thank everyone who has joined the Rainbow Connection for making it continue to grow in membership. We are doing great things in the community and should be proud of our work. Here are some things we are planning to do soon:

- The last two Days of Observances for the 2025 Welcoming calendar will be:

1. October 12th, where we will honor the life and tragic death of Mathew Shepard, who was an American student at the University of Wyoming and was beaten, tortured, and left to die near Laramie on October 6, 1998. He died 6 days later from severe head injuries sustained during the attack.

2. We will celebrate World AIDS Day on Sunday November 30th and will be hosting a speaker from The McGregor Clinic to share.

- The 2026 Welcoming calendar has been developed and will honor different areas of the LGBTQ+ experience. I am pleased to say that when we honor the Trans community, we will have a speaker who will be able to share their journey.

- The Rainbow Connection will soon be organizing a committee to design an All Faiths Float to march behind when we participate in Cape Coral's Pride parade on March 7th, 2026. More information to come soon.

- Fort Myers will NOT hold a Pride event this year. The Rainbow Connection team decided that we should start participating in the Charlotte County Pride Festival held in Punta Gorda during the month of October. Unfortunately, we missed the deadline for this year, so it will be added to our calendar for 2026.

- Rainbow Connection had elected to have Cape Coral Pride be the beneficiary for the October "Share the Plate" this year. We have invited one of their Board of Directors to speak at Sunday Service on October 5th to tell us what they are all about and what All Faiths means to them and their mission.

- Our minister, Alberita Johnson will take part of an Interfaith Alliance panel who be hosting a discussion and Q&A session that will be focused on the "Clobber Passages" in the Bible that are used to shame, oppress, and exclude the Queer community. The presentation is sponsored by Interfaith Alliance and Naples Pride and will feature Albie, Rev. Craig from MCC, and a Rabbi from the Fort Myers area. Naples Pride has requested this event be exclusively for the LGBTQ+ community. See the bulletin board for an upcoming poster with more information.

I encourage anyone interested in helping or joining the Rainbow Connection team to come to a meeting or see David or Carole. Our next meeting is scheduled for October 12th. Please let one of us know if you might be interested.

Carole Latino: carolelatino@gmail.com

David Donovan: ddonovan722@gmail.com

RACIAL EQUITY TEAM NEWS

by Susan Snow, Chair

There was no September Racial Equity Team Meeting. The Racial Equity Team will resume regular meetings in October and meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 10 a.m. We encourage you to join us.

DIGNITY: ITS ESSENTIAL ROLE IN RESOLVING CONFLICT

Sunday Morning Workshops

9:15 a.m. Oct. 5- Dec. 7 - (No workshop Oct. 19)

TENTH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

With a New Preface

Dignity

Its Essential Role
in Resolving Conflict

Donna Hicks, Ph.D.

"This book is a must-read for those who want to experience peace in their everyday lives and peace in the world around them. ... If you want peace, be sure everyone's dignity is intact."

—From the Foreword by Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu

Join us for an exploration of dignity, its role in human conflict, and its power to improve relationships. Joyce Ramay will lead nine weeks of discussions on the book, *Dignity: Its Essential Role in Resolving Conflict*, by Donna Hicks, with Foreword by Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu: "This book is a must read for those who want to experience peace in their everyday lives and peace in

the world around them.... If you want peace, be sure everyone's dignity is intact."

Drawing on her extensive experience in international conflict resolution and on insights from evolutionary biology, psychology, and neuroscience, Donna Hicks explains what the elements of dignity are, how to recognize dignity violations, how to respond when we are not treated with dignity, how dignity can restore a broken relationship, why leaders must understand the concept of dignity, and more. By choosing dignity as a way of life, Hicks shows that we can open the way to greater peace within ourselves and to a safer and more humane world for all.

CLIMATE ACTION TEAM NEWS

by Joan Marshall, Co-Chair



October 6th – 12th has been designated as Florida Climate Week, (FCW).

Your Climate Action Team is looking for your participation in helping kick off this special week with a sign-holding demonstration outside on McGregor Blvd. on Sunday, October 5th, after the 9:15 a.m. morning workshop (from 10:00 to 10:30 a.m.) and also after the service. For more information about FCW you can go to their website:

<https://floridaclimateweek.org/>

Here's a brief excerpt from their webpage:

“Welcome to Florida Climate Week (FCW)!

Now in its fifth year, Florida Climate Week is a powerful celebration of engagement, education, and collective action focused on the climate and resilience challenges facing our state.

As Florida confronts the growing impacts of extreme heat, stronger storms, rising seas, and more, the call to strengthen our resilience has never been more urgent. Florida Climate Week offers a moment for communities across the state to come together as one team to protect and preserve the paradise we call home.

This weeklong initiative invites all Floridians to tune in to expert-led virtual sessions, connect through community events, take meaningful action, and amplify their voices for a sustainable future.”

Our October CAT meeting will actually take place during Florida Climate Week at 1:30 pm., Tuesday, Oct. 7th on Zoom. Our meetings are open to all who wish to participate. We often have participants from other climate organizations in attendance. Come learn more about the growing climate movement here in Southwest Florida.

DESTINATION JOY *(continued from pg. 2)*

Sept. - Building Belonging - done and effective.

Oct. - Cultivating Compassion

Nov. - Nurturing Gratitude

Dec. - Choosing Hope

Jan. - Practicing Resistance

Feb. - Embodying Resilience

Mar. - Paying Attention

Apr. - Embracing Possibility

May - Awakening Curiosity

June - Flourishing Together

Each month, we will focus and highlight our theme in Sunday Services including Music, Children and Youth Programming, social media and Small Groups. I encourage you to take time to ponder and meditate on our monthly themes. They are designed to inspire us to personal application and external action that positively affects the Beloved Community inside our doors and out. This month's theme is Cultivating Compassion. This topic carries great significance today, as prevailing sentiments of displacement, loneliness and mountains of uncertainty persist among individuals and groups. This often manifests in defensive behaviors as people navigate their environment, seeking to establish a sense of understanding and acceptance.

Our October theme, Cultivation Compassion, stretches us to center love and sustain the Beloved Community as in the following quote: Compassion hurts. When you feel connected to everything, you also feel responsible for everything. And you cannot turn away. Your destiny is bound with the destinies of others. - Andrew Boyd

All Faiths is a place of love and joy, a place filled with people of hope. As we continue our journey, let us look forward to sharing our themes and embodying them. They call us to self-reflection with hope to inspire action.

WELCOMING AMBASSADORS NEEDED

by Carole Latino, Membership Co-Chair

I have been thinking about new people who come and thankfully keep coming. I send them a welcome email after their first visits, but Dottie and I are unable to engage regularly with all of them. Having other people follow up has been effective at other Congregations. If you would like to be an “Ambassador”, please let me know,

In order to be an Ambassador, you should be a member of All Faiths or another UU congregation for at least one year and must be friendly. We are the face of All Faiths, so let's put a

smile on it! As an Ambassador, you will be assigned to help a new person or persons (if it's a couple) become acquainted with our people, activities and facility. If they are not present, you can give them a call to see how they are doing. If they are not well, you can ask them if it's okay for the Care and Support team to share with the congregation on Sunday.

I am looking forward to seeing who is interested in being a real advocate for All Faiths.

We are strong, we can do this!

TREASURER'S REPORT

by John Conrad, Treasurer

Cash Assets – August 2025

First Horizon Checking	\$ 7,631
Raymond James Legacy	5,187
Live Oak Operating Reserve (CD)	23,626
First Horizon Capital Reserve	4,765
Live Oak Capital Reserve (S)	29,738
Live Oak Operating Reserve (S)	43,287
Live Oak Legacy (CD)	22,309
Live Oak Legacy Savings	24,863

Total	\$161,407
Prior Month	<u>176,956</u>
Net Gain/Loss	(- \$ 15,549)

August 2025 Profit & Loss

Operating Income	\$ 13,206
Operating Expense	<u>20,881</u>
Net Gain/Loss	(-\$ 7,676)

Revenue/Operating Income and Expenses:

As we entered the new 2025-2026 fiscal year on April 1, All Faiths budgeted \$202,086 for pledge giving; to date, actual Not Alone pledges totaled \$185,160 (86.9%).

In August, we received \$11,610.00 in pledge giving towards our Not Alone Pledge Drive. And in the fiscal year that just ended, \$28,412.63 was received for the Not Alone pledge drive.

Year to date (since April 1), our pledge giving has totaled \$70,869.95, while we budgeted \$84,206.00 (84.2%).

The only unusual expenses incurred in the General Fund Operating Account during August was the \$4,500.00 annual gift to the UUA.

August's Interest Income was \$421.66.

At the beginning of the 2023-2024 fiscal year, several new accounts were created at Live Oak to generate increased interest income. The 1 Year CD rate is 4.1%. And the Savings rate is currently at 3.15%.

The August monthly transfer/deposit of \$1,640.00 to the Live Oak Capital Reserve account was made. The printed signs for the new sign frame were purchased and installed at a cost of \$1,348.30.

In August, \$557.00 was collected for the Quality Life Center (Racial Equity Team).

ONLINE DIRECTORY UPDATES

by Becky Ross, All Faiths Webmaster

Have you checked out the latest online directory on the All Faiths website? It includes contact information for all our Members and Friends.

Speaking of the All Faiths Directory, does your photo look like this? →



We'd love to have a photo instead.



Stop by before or after services on Sunday, **October 5**, or Sunday, **October 12**, and we will take your photo and upload it to our online directory.

If you are not attending services on those dates, you are still invited to stop by to have your picture taken, or call the office during the month of October to schedule an appointment.

Tricks or Treats in the Parking Lot!

As we do every year, we will hand out goodies in the parking lot from 6 - 8 on Halloween, Friday, October 31.

Please sign up on the bulletin board if you would like to help. This is a ton of fun – hundreds of people in fantastic costumes stop by for a goodie.

We appreciate your donations of candy. Please drop them off on Sundays between October 5 and October 26.



Come visit All Faiths Table!

Join QLC for a:

FALL FESTIVAL

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 24TH
5:30PM - 7:30PM

FREE ADMISSION!

Games, Food, Fun & much more!

Be part of the fun!
 Sign up as a vendor or make a donation!

Contact: dmerricks@qlcswfl.org





SAVE THE DATES!

October 10 - 31: SCARECROWS IN THE PARK.
 Visit Lakes Regional Park to see All Faiths' Scarecrow.

Saturday, November 1: JUNK-IN-THE-TRUNK
 It's that time again! Start cleaning out your closets. Set up at 7am, sale from 8am to 1pm. Sign up on the bulletin board.

Saturday, November 15: ALL FAITHS' ANNUAL FALL CLEAN UP!
 Stop by and join friends for our annual Fall Clean Up. There is something for everyone to help with. Inside and out, we bring the sparkle back. Sign up on the bulletin board.

Saturday, February 21: ALL FAITHS CELEBRATES ITS 25th ANNIVERSARY!
 Mark your calendars for this one. We will host a super celebration at Tara Woods Club House in North Fort Myers. Stay tuned for more details. Tickets will go on sale beginning January 4th.

ACMA LIVE MUSIC SCHEDULE!

Saturday, October 4 - 7:00pm

Alice Wallace in Concert!
 Dennis Michael Opens

Saturday, October 18 - 7:00pm

Grant Malloy Smith in Concert!
 Steve Waterbury Opens



The Listening Room at All Faiths

2756 McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers, Florida
 General public \$20/Member discount \$15
 Donations at the Door

WEDNESDAY NIGHT MARKET AT THE ALLIANCE FOR THE ARTS

Join the Membership and Justice Committee at our All Faiths' table at the Alliance's Wednesday Night Market. Night Market is held the second Wednesday of each month from 5 pm – 8 pm and provides a unique opportunity to shop local artist booths featuring a variety of products while savoring food and drinks available on-site. Bring your lawn chair to enjoy live music or sign up for a chance to perform for your community. Be a part of creativity in the making!

If you can help staff the All Faiths' table one month, please sign up on the bulletin board.



Ice Cream Social

Next one on October 26
 Sponsored by Lewis Robinson



Sundays are fun-days
at All Faiths!

From top left: Helen Dixon & Frankie Jennings, Bob & Marge DiGalbo, Giovanni, Joan Marshall, Carlos. Bottom row: Wayne Reese & Donalie Benyak, Sharon Heinrich, Minister Albie, Brad & Becky Davidson, Doug & Diane Cartwright.

All Faiths Unitarian Congregation

2756 McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers, Florida 33901

Phone: (239) 226-0900 – Email: office@allfaithsuu.org – Website: www.allfaithsuu.org

Founding Minister: The Late Rev. Dr. Wayne A. Robinson

Executive Board: David Donovan, Chair; Dick Scudder, Vice Chair; John Conrad, Treasurer; Barb McFarlane, Secretary.

Directors: Helen Dixon, Frank Geltner, Carol Heilsberg, Ken Malkin, Lewis Robinson.

Ex-Officio, Non Voting: Marge DiGalbo, Past Chair; Alberita Johnson, Minister

Staff: Regina Kilmartin, Administrator; Carlos Garcia, Music Director; Sharon Heinrich, CYP Director; Joe Gayton, Sexton.

Commissioned Lay Minister: Alberita (Albie) Johnson

Communications

Newsletter

Regina Kilmartin

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Weezie Close/Joyce Ramay

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Regina Kilmartin/Becky Ross

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Program Support

Michelle Gemma/Barb McFarlane

Member Services

Dottie Mayol/Carole Latino

Greeters

Dick Scudder

Care and Support

Joyce Ramay

Circles of Care

Susan Snow

Finance

Joyce Ramay

Stewardship Committee

Ken Malkin

Nominating Committee

Sharon Gray

Sound Technicians

David Donovan/Brad Davidson

Livestreaming

Regina Kilmartin/Sharon Gray

Brad Davidson

Building and Grounds

Frank Geltner/Brian Bigelow

Social Action & Outreach

Climate Action Team

Joan Marshall/Carol Heilsberg

Racial Equity Team

Susan Snow

L.I.F.E.

Barb McFarlane

JoAnn Hilliard

Mano a Mano

Charlotte Blitt

Operation Joy & Solos Group

Annelly Hudanick

Animal Ministry

Sharon Gray

Rainbow Connection

David Donovan/Carole Latino



Deadline for the **October** Issue of *Connections*
is **Septembr 18**

(Brief announcements may be accepted later,
and will be included *if* space and time permit.)



OFFICE HOURS: 9am to 4pm, Monday–Thurs;
9am to 12pm, Friday & Sunday.
Congregational Administrator: Regina Kilmartin